

# THE MODERN LIBRARIAN

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COVERS EVERY PHASE OF SCHOOL, COLLEGE,  
AND PUBLIC LIBRARY WORK AND HAS A CIRCULATION  
THROUGHOUT INDIA, GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA.

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*Office*.—1, CUST ROAD, LAHORE, INDIA.

# \*The Library and the New Citizen

Mrs R. M. CHETSINGH, B. A. (London).

ONE of the most used words of our day would seem to be value and one of the common occupations of intellectuals that of appraising and evaluating—indications perhaps, that there is much reason for applying to this post-war civilisation the epithet “devaluationist.”

We well know how ours is a great heritage, how through the struggles of past centuries mankind has inherited in great measure sound and potential freedom—wealth, knowledge and power to control environment. But we know, too, that part of the legacy bequeathed to us is a desperate confusion of values. Amidst the wreckage of former restraints and outworn conventions, there seems to be little of the old order left standing upright without having a question mark attached to it.

The problem of readjustment and revaluation is not peculiarly modern. It presented itself most insistently in the days of the Renaissance to such scholars and educationists as Erasmus who did so much to help to build a bridge between the old world which was passing away and the new which had just come to birth. Then the task was to lead men out of the tutelage of traditional beliefs and formulas into a new world of freedom, emancipation and of never-ending discoveries—a world with new confidence in man himself—his endowments and his capacities.

Now the task seems to be to create in man a new passion for Reality, a new sense of responsibility and a new capacity for citizenship.

Then as now the chief foe was Folly. While Erasmus had occasion to point out that the best way of worshipping the Saints is not by kissing their old shoes and dirty handkerchiefs but by imitating their virtues, we in our day have to find a way of escape from the folly of pursuing so devotedly, by reason of confusion and ignorance, unworthy and unsatisfying objects of desire.

The popular relaxations of this age are evidence enough of this aimlessness. In litera-

ture, the illustrated paper, in amusement, the cinema, in drama, the revue—these three things seem to be growing in favour both with the ignorant mob and the cultivated mob in every town and city, turn where we may. “Nor is there force in the contention,” writes Dr Welton in his *Psychology of Education* when alluding to the idle and meaningless character of popular entertainments, “that the audiences have so exhausted their minds in thought that they are too tired for any but the lightest stimulation. Without want of charity it may be suggested that an equally tenable hypothesis is that their minds are numbed and atrophied from want of exercise in anything except the immediate demands of their material lives”

As for the village where the cinema has not yet penetrated, passivity of mind is proverbial—and is by no means the peculiarity of the East. “Sometimes I sits and thinks a bit”, said a village pensioner “and then again just sits.” With most no doubt it is just sitting yet I would not suggest that the villager, literate or illiterate, is incapable of mental concentration. The rare ones among them can pursue their own thoughts to real purpose. The inspiration of Nature is there and men with receptive minds do cultivate the habit of putting something in their pipes and smoking it as did Snarling Bob in L. P. Jacks’ *Mad Shepherds*.

Passivity of mind, however, and I refer to the passivity of literates, is what the Library Movement, which we are here to advance, has to reckon with and it matters very much that it should deal with it more and more successfully.

That values have to be readjusted is no matter for gloomy regret or anxiety, but real danger lies in that mental inertia and aimlessness which prevents men from distinguishing the real from the counterfeit, from practising historical imagination, from thinking through to conclusions. It is this that makes the exercise of the rights of citizenship a menace rather than a strength to society.

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\*Paper read at the Third Annual Punjab Library Conference held at Lahore, April 13–15, 1933.

The Library then is no luxury for those who can afford the trimmings of life but it is one of the chief necessities for inspiring our common life and making it truly profitable.

Take the need for honest citizens to consider the problems of modern life without prejudice and to work for their solution. This is only possible as more libraries provide the necessary stimulus, not merely by making the best books available but also by arranging for discussions and, in the absence of any other agency, of courses of lectures also. I can call to mind a class held in a midland town in England in 1931 under the auspices of a University Extension Committee for the purpose of studying Post War History. Amongst its members were two postmen, an electrician, several clerks, a working-woman and also a woman of leisure—a variety which added much to the usefulness of the discussions and to the interest of the course. There the lecturer introduced us to new books and new points of view and helped create a wider understanding of our complex political and economic systems.

Similarly there is a need in Lahore for Libraries to make available such courses of study and to create a mental attitude which can sympathise with and understand the feelings and aspirations of other parties and other nations. What is wanted is not more propagandists but more enquirers with a fearless zeal for truth and the habit of fair and unprejudiced examination of every point of view. Then may we hope for that sympathy and tolerance which comes only with understanding.

A library however will not allow our interest in books to begin and end with modern politi-

cal and economic problems. It will reveal to us through literary studies the many-sidedness of human nature and the absorbing interest to be found in human beings as they really are and not as caricatured in the lecture palace.

The library will also make available for the layman the fundamental teaching of natural science, without which no one in this scientific age can be truly educated. In fact to have missed such teaching, as I realise in my own case, is to be condemned to a kind of exile and to be a stranger in the modern world of electricity and wireless.

Sir Walter Raleigh, the man of letters, has written of the indescribable exhilaration of leaving school and entering college which he says is in great part the exhilaration of making acquaintance with teachers "who care much about their subject and little or nothing about their pupils." "To escape from the eternal personal judgments which make a school a place of torment is to walk upon air. The schoolmaster looks at you; the college professor looks the way you are looking."

From what we know of the uneducational cram system of this University, which tempts a student to look no where save towards the goal of his degree, this exhilaration can be, unfortunately, the experience of very few. But Libraries are, as we have heard, themselves Universities. No endeavour, then, can be more worthy of ceaseless effort than this of the Punjab Library Association—namely of multiplying and increasing the influence of such Universities, where can be found the delights of freedom and where the living minds of all ages will inspire the thought of young and old and give to all a love of progressive truth.



# \*The Educational Use of School Libraries

Mrs A. E. HARPER, M. A.

THE SUBJECT presupposes a library as an essential of every good school. But the possession of a good library will not ensure success in the school's purpose of education. The library must be used and its use must help, not hinder, genuine education.

A duty of the school often neglected is teaching the use of leisure. In a discouraging number of schools that I happen to know children learn quite thoroughly what *not* to do in their hours of leisure. Apparently one may 'read' through the Tenth Class and not read again! Yet most of us will admit there is truth in Carlisle's statement that 'the university and highest schools can do no more than is begun in the primary schools—teach us to read.' So important is reading to education.

Indian education has often been criticized as "too literary." And indeed it does appear to stress books. It is strange, then, that so exclusively a literary education should not succeed in teaching the majority to read and to love reading. It fails in the very task it emphasizes. In most of our elementary schools children learn *how to read*, but they do not learn to *read*. In other words, they acquire the mechanics of reading, but not the habit of reading. They have not learned to turn to books naturally for pleasure and for help in their everyday life. Too many boys and girls who have finished an elementary (or even High School or University education) do not care to own any books after they leave school, and seldom read.

Why is this so? Why do so small a proportion of the (so-called) educated, patronize libraries, or find joy in books?

I have no scientific data from India on which to base answers to these questions, but I would hazard a guess that there are three main reasons: first, the school never paid special attention to teaching its pupils how to gain pleasure from libraries and books; second, reading never became easy for them during

childhood; and third attractive children's books are so rare in the vernaculars. (I may say here in parenthesis that the entire discussion here of school libraries and reading in elementary schools refers to vernacular libraries and reading in the vernacular).

First, then, the school has never given special attention to teaching the use and enjoyment of books. The remedy is, of course, school libraries. But the mere existence and use in the ordinary sense is not enough. They must be *educationally* used, and by this I mean that the use and enjoyment of books must be specifically taught through carefully guided practice throughout the school life of each child, to the end that right habits of reading should be built. A large and expensive library is not required. There are fascinating possibilities in even a very small collection of books.

The following suggestions on teaching the habit of reading in elementary schools, were proposed by the writer of this paper in an article recently published in *The Moga Journal for Teachers* called *Lessons on Books*.

## Class I.

The first step is to teach the children how to open a new book for the first time. There is danger that the binding may be broken by rough handling. Ask the children to imagine how it would feel if someone suddenly and harshly bent their bodies backward and tried to touch their heels and heads. This will make them laugh, but will help them to remember. The following is the proper method of opening a new book. Rest the binding on a firm surface (floor or table). Grasp the leaves firmly with the left hand. With the right hand press the back cover gently down and then the front cover. Then take about a dozen leaves and press them down on the back cover, running the finger gently along the binding. Repeat with a dozen leaves at the front and so on till all the leaves have been opened. Such a method will prevent cracks in sewn and glued bindings and it will also increase the life of books bound with staples. This practice should be used in all classes whenever new books are handled.

Now the children are to look through their new books, especially at the pictures. Encourage them to express pleasure in them.

The teacher should note if any are spoiling the fresh pages of the book with dirty fingers, and send these pupils quietly to wash their hands. Do not scold or call special attention to this fault. Praise especially those who are clean and careful.

\*Paper read at the Third Annual Punjab Library Conference held at Lahore, April 13—15, 1933.



Another day a *conversation* may be started again about the way books are sometimes spoiled. A well-kept book which has been used, and a soiled, dog-eared, torn book should be shown, and discussed in detail. The following and other points in the care of books will be brought out:—A book should be carefully opened the first time, so that its binding will not be broken. A book should never be bent back with the covers together. It should never be laid down open and upside down to keep the place. A book-marker should be used instead. Books should not be marked with pencil or ink, nor should the corners be turned down. Books should always be put away on shelves or in desks.

The methods of care above mentioned will be best learned by practice. The children will enjoy designing and making book-markers for use in their new books. They may plan a little drama in which The Books sympathize with one of their number who has been bent by careless handling and tell how they like to be treated.

The condition of the children's books should be constantly checked throughout the year.

### Class II.

The class may become interested in *keeping a record* of what each child reads. Let this be their own project. They may wish to keep the record in a book with a page for each child. The name of each book he reads should be recorded with the date of finishing. Another way would be to make a large chart with a decorated border to be hung on the wall in the 'library corner'. On this would be written the names of all the books in the library with two columns under each book. In one column the children who have read that book write their names and in the other the date they have finished it. Such a chart will suggest many number problems, as "If A—reads 2 books in one month, how many, at the same rate, will he read in 10 months?"

At least once a week the class should be *taken to the school library*. During the week many questions come up which the child can cannot answer. These questions will arise from their project activities, from their reading, from their nature study, etc. The teacher should not answer all these questions, but some should be written on the blackboard and kept till the library period. When they go to the library the children will have something to "find out." The teacher should know beforehand what books and pictures are in the library which will give them the information they desire. In these library periods the children will learn gradually how to handle books, how to find page references, how to find books on certain low shelves reserved for the Primary classes, how to look at pictures, how to keep pictures and books tidy, how to put them back in their places. Occasionally they may be allowed to count the books on different shelves and find how many are in the whole library. This will make a splendid problem in addition.

The names of books they use in the school library and also names of their favourite story books should be written on large cards in the teacher's best handwriting and used for *reading and language games*. One such game is the following. The cards are placed (with thumb-tacks) on walls and doors. The teacher holds a box in which he has placed slips of paper on which he has written questions about the books (as,

for instance, "In what story do four tigers get so angry with each other that they eat each other up?", etc.). Each child draws a question and tries to find the card with the correct name of the story and bring it to the teacher. If a child fails, he must pass his slip to one who has succeeded.

### Class III.

A good project for this class is *making their own book cards* for a library record. On each card should be written the name of the book, the name of the author, and a statement about the book. Each pupil who has read the book should write whether he likes it or not, and the reasons why. The best statement will then be chosen by the class to write on the card. A box may be made by the children to keep the cards in. The purpose of such a card-catalogue is to help other readers in choosing their books. At the end of the year the class may present the box of cards to the school library.

*Managing their own library.* This project will be very valuable to teach reliability and care of books. The class may make their own book-shelves, select and frame a picture to hang above, make a pottery vase for flowers, etc. They will discuss the care of books and may choose to make a special dust-cloth for dusting them. If, they find that paper-covered books are too easily worn out they may write a request to the school authorities to have the books bound. They should keep careful lists of the books and their costs. Many arithmetic lessons will emphasize the money value of books, the losses through carelessness, etc. The class should make their own rules for the use of their "library corner" and their textbooks.

### Class IV.

*Forming a Village Library Association.* All the problems of raising money, buying books, fixing rules, collecting dues and fines, repairing books, etc., may be worked out by children. They can build a model library. They can keep careful lists of books bought and books borrowed from the school library and from friends.

*Making rules for the use of the school library.* Discussing how to improve the library will give much valuable practice in the use of books. Practical arithmetic is involved in finding out the cost of the library—the income from fines, losses through carelessness, etc.

Other projects suggested in this article for *Middle Classes* were: designing and making individual book-markers, and book-plates; making a book to give to the Library; studying how and why books are made; investigating the printing industry; learning book-binding; a study of libraries; a drama on books.

The second reason why books are not loved is because reading has been too difficult for children. It would probably surprise us to know how many adults are handicapped by faulty habits of the movements of the eyes in reading. A large number of investigations of

eye movements in reading have produced clear knowledge of the factors involved in successful and pleasurable reading. There is great need of such investigations in India, in reading the vernacular. A simple experiment will show any one how eyes move in reading. A small mirror should be placed on a page facing the page the subject is reading. The observer watches the eye-movements in the mirror. It will be found that the eyes move forward in jerks, pausing from 4 to 14 times in a line. During these pauses the words and phrases are perceived. No reading is done during the movements.

Now a good reader makes relatively few pauses per line. The eyes move in a rhythmical progress along the line, and there is an accurate return sweep between lines. Such a reader recognises a wide span of printed words, and usually reads with speed and accuracy. There is a minimum of strain and fatigue.

Many readers, on the other hand, are found to have bad habits of eye movements. There are frequent pauses, irregular progress, and many inefficient, hesitating regressive movements. Slow reading and fatigue result. It has also been proven that such slow readers are more often inaccurate, and are more faulty in comprehension than those who have a wide span of recognition and rhythmical eye-movements.

The blame for these faulty eye-movements and bad reading habits may now be definitely ascribed to the Primary school. Experiments have shown that the major development in span of recognition, speed of recognition, and regularity of eye-movements, comes in the first four years of school. There is little improvement later. It is true that by very difficult practice and determination adults can improve their speed in reading, but it is very seldom done. The essential habits in reading are fixed in the first four years of schooling.\*

The old methods of teaching reading in Primary classes definitely begin and fix bad habits. Word-by-word, letter-by-letter reading hinders quick comprehension and rapid rhythmical progress. The new methods of teaching reading have been scientifically determined, and their effectiveness proven. Peyton and

Porter carried on a controlled experiment in six large American public schools.† This resulted in a demonstration that modern methods produced superior results in almost every single case. "Given equal intelligence children taught by the newer methods, show about *twice* the achievement in reading of those taught by the old method. They read almost twice as rapidly, twice as much material, and, their accuracy of comprehension was nearly twice as high."

All this of English reading and Western children. Such experiments are needed in India, and would probably yield similar results. I am certain that continued observation of school-boys or adults reading Urdu, would convince any of you that faulty eye-movements are handicaps to a great many. Those who have acquired bad habits in school are the ones who are failing to support and enjoy our libraries, and are living meagre lives because reading gives them no pleasure.

The third reason why books are not loved and read more is that attractive books for children in the early stages of learning to read, are unfortunately so rare in Urdu. In this connection we are very glad to give the credit to a number of publishers who are making a sincere effort to produce children's literature. I was happy to see on entering this hall that a number of very attractive new Urdu books for children are displayed in the booths of the publishers. Many of them are well printed and have beautiful illustrations. Teachers and libraries in the Punjab are also most fortunate in the children's magazines which are published at Lahore, Kharar and elsewhere. It may be said by way of suggestion that in most of these books for children, attention has not been paid to the careful selection and gradation of vocabulary. Hence they cannot be effectively used in the first stages. It is pertinent here to refer to a series of articles on investigations in the selection and gradation of vocabulary in Hindi school readers by J. C. Koenig now appearing the Moga Journal for Teachers (April, May and June, 1933).

Attractive and interesting material for reading is one of the chief factors in developing

†Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. X, pp. 264-266.

Many other experiments are reported in Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading—W. S. Gray. Univ. of Chicago Press.

\*University of Chicago, Educational Monographs, No. 21.

good habits of reading. Many readers and other books for children are uninteresting to them. They are usually too difficult, too monotonous and written in poor literary style. It is not only necessary that the reading material should be attractive but it should also be printed in such a way that eye strain and fatigue are not induced. The size of the type, the length of the line, the spacing, the heaviness of the type, quality of paper, size of margin are all important factors in books for children. Proper selection of reading material and proper attention to the physical make-up of the books helps to increase the span of recognition. Wide span of recognition directs the children's attention to meanings rather than mechanical habits and therefore encourages a large amount of reading.

In closing I should like to make a special appeal to my learned audience to write stories

and other literature for children. It is unfortunate that those who are scholarly and educated should leave the production of children's literature to commercial text-book writers. The hope is that the literati should give more attention to the development of children's literature. The future readers of our public libraries are in the Primary classes to-day. It should be a privilege to those who believe in libraries to help the young along the pleasant paths of reading. One of the developments of Urdu literature which should be devoutly longed for is a renaissance of literature for children—history, fiction, poetry, science and general information. I earnestly hope that some of those who appreciate for themselves the joys of culture and knowledge may desire to open up this richer world to the children in our elementary schools.

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## \*The Punjab Central Library Scheme an attempt towards its realisation.

RAM LABHAYA, B.A.,

*Librarian, Punjab Public Library, Lahore.*

**1. Introduction.** What is a centralization Scheme? To put it in simple words, the Central Library Scheme is that arrangement by which the stronger libraries situated in a particular area are intended to assist the weaker ones without injustice to their own constituents. The essence of this scheme is voluntary co-operation between the libraries participating in it. The need for mutual co-operation will be readily recognised from the fact that no library in the world except perhaps a copyright library can possess all the literature that an educated public needs. The public libraries in large cities can meet most of the requirements of the general reader; they can do perhaps much for commerce, industry and scholarship, but they cannot do all. The smaller town libraries cannot even supply adequately the legitimate demands of the general public. Thus it is evident that a library must be able to command resources

beyond its own stock if it is to meet demands which will increase with the increasing development of education and with the greater application of knowledge to commerce and industry. This scheme of mutual help is of special benefit to the smaller libraries, for instead of having to refuse the requests of their readers, they can extend their sphere of work by being linked up to a new source of supply. This scheme is not the result of my imagination; but it is being actively organized and introduced in England and is already an accomplished fact in some of the states of the United States of America. The Punjab Centralization Scheme of which I am to speak now, is almost identical with the English and the American schemes, but it is much older than either of these.

**2. The Genesis of the Punjab Central Library Scheme**—In 1896 Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick, then Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, appointed a Commission with Sir C. L. Tupper

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\*Paper read at the Third Annual Punjab Library Conference, April 13–15, 1933

as President to look into the affairs, financial and others, of the Punjab Public Library Lahore. The Commission held that the Library, served useful educational purposes and was deserving of Government support. It was also held that the Library being a provincial institution was entitled to support from the Local Bodies. Consequently the Punjab Government not only gave a liberal grant to the Library but also commended it to Local Bodies in the province through Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners for support. It was proposed that Municipal Committees and District Boards should open libraries which should be fed as regards supply of books by a provincial institution like the Punjab Public Library. It was arranged that these branch libraries might take out 100 volumes at a time for a subscription of Rs. 50 per annum, or 50 volumes at a time for a subscription of Rs. 25 per annum. Volumes so taken out could be kept for three months and the Local Body maintaining the branch library would make its own terms with local readers. No deposits would be necessary, but the Local Bodies should make good losses or damage incurred to books while in their possession. If it were found by experience that many duplicates of certain works were needed to make the scheme successful, the Local Bodies joining it might be invited to contribute donations to assist the Punjab Public Library in providing the additional copies required. The scheme elicited a fairly good response from the Local Bodies and may be called the nucleus of the Punjab Central Library Scheme.

**3. The Formulation of the Scheme.** In its present shape the scheme owes its existence to the All-India Conference of Librarians, the first of its kind, which met in Lahore in January 1918. The Conference was summoned by the Government of India in response to the growing public interest taken in libraries and the problems represented by them. The time and the place were selected because the Science Congress held its sittings at Lahore in those days and it was thought that it would be convenient for some to attend both the meetings in succession. The Local Governments, the Universities, the Departments of the Government of India and the leading public libraries in the country were invited to nominate their representatives. The Hon'ble Mr J. A. Richey, then Director of Public Instruction, Punjab; Mr A. C. Woolner M. A. C. I. E. then Registrar

of the Punjab University; my friend and teacher, Mr Labhu Ram, then Librarian of the Punjab Public Library and the late Mr Mukand Lal Bhatia, then Assistant Librarian, Punjab University Library, were representatives from the Punjab. The main recommendation of the conference was the promotion of reciprocity between libraries of all kinds in the country and the recognition of the principle of inter-borrowing between them. The resolution ran thus :—

(i) That the principle of inter-borrowing of books between libraries of all kinds be adopted as far as may be deemed practicable ;

(ii) That it is desirable to divide India into a number of circles within which facilities should be adopted for the circulation of books and periodicals, and that an equal number of distribution centres be formed, each centre being used as a bureau of information and a borrowing agency for its own circle and also for inter-circle purposes ;

(iii) That these circles might at first be North-East India (Centre: Calcutta), North-West India (Centre: Lahore), Bombay (Centre: Bombay City) and Madras (Centre: Madras City). The larger circles might be expected gradually to break up into smaller circles ;

(iv) That the Government of India should in consultation with the Local Governments determine the number of circles and the limits and centre of each circle and the nature of the distributing agency.

The scheme embodied in this resolution was accepted by the Government of India and was later on put into operation. Accordingly India (excluding Burma) was divided into four circles within which facilities were arranged to be provided for the circulation of books and periodicals.

In consultation with the Punjab Government it was decided to constitute the Punjab, the Indian States located in or near the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province a Library circle, and the Punjab Public Library, Lahore was selected as the Central Library for this circle.

**4. The Functions of the Central Library.**—The functions of the Central Agency as laid down by the Government of India were :—

"It is not contemplated that the central libraries and agencies set up should exercise control or any measure of restrictive supervision. Their work, in addition to corresponding with one another, co-ordinating and rendering mutual assistance, would be :—

(i) to collect and impart information regarding the contents of the other libraries in the circles

(ii) to act as the agency through which one library in the circle may borrow from another when this cannot be done directly ;



iii to be an agency for the exchange and transfer of books and the distribution of superfluous books ;

(iv) to make recommendations to libraries regarding the purchase of books and periodicals with a view chiefly to preventing undesirable duplication, and

(v) to assist and promote co-operation in the indexing of books "

It was emphasized that these central agencies would exercise the functions vested in them so as not to interfere with the independence of the various libraries comprised within their circle, but by way of enlarging the utility of each library and of putting its readers into the way of obtaining books from other libraries.

As regards the loan of books mentioned in one of these functions it was observed that a widespread system of borrowing could not be substituted save with the good will of the libraries concerned and under some guarantee of the proper use and return of the books. It was thought that if borrowing took place through a central agency in each circle, a feeling of confidence would be established, though inter-borrowing among the libraries in each circle was not prohibited. It was further laid down that one of the duties of the central agency would be to approach the various departmental libraries within the circle and to arrange with them the terms on which readers could be accommodated with works.

But the question arises as to how far should the Central Library aid the resources of the libraries affiliated with it? Obviously no central library can meet the demands of the affiliated libraries if it were to supply every book asked for by every library in its jurisdiction. It would in other words be encumbering the Central Library with responsibilities which it would not be able to discharge efficiently. Therefore it is undesirable that the affiliated libraries should be entirely relieved of their responsibilities, for if it offered an unlimited supply, many libraries might become parasites at its expense. As a matter of fact, public and other libraries will continue to supply such books as are or ought to be in their stock. The Central Library will supply what neither of the affiliated libraries can be expected ordinarily to supply. Such books will be the rarer and more expensive books, or those not in general demand like works of fiction. Again it is not necessary that the books supplied by the Central Library should be from its own shelves only. Its function will be to arrange to

supply any book which it knows is possessed by another library in its jurisdiction.

5. **The Operation of the Scheme in the Punjab.**—It has been mentioned before that the Punjab Public Library, Lahore, was selected as the Central Library for the circle consisting of the Punjab, the Indian States located in or near the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province. Consequently the Punjab Public Library undertook the functions of the Central Library in the year 1929. A circular letter explaining the aims and objects and the functions of the Central Library Scheme and the benefits it would confer, if adopted, on library service in general and scholarship in particular, was addressed to some forty libraries situated in the Punjab, Indian States located in or near the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province. These libraries were invited to join the scheme and in case of assent to send for record in the Central Library (the Punjab Punjab Library) copies of their complete catalogues of books and the lists of journals and periodicals to which they subscribed. The only libraries left out were those which contained only works of fiction or less than 500 books.

(a) *Catalogues.*—As many as thirty libraries from all over the province responded to the invitation and later on joined the scheme. Some of these libraries duly sent in the copies of their catalogues and the lists of journals and periodicals to which they subscribed, while others, mainly college libraries, regretted their inability in the matter, saying that they followed the card catalogue system and had no printed catalogues which could be conveniently supplied. But all felt the necessity of supplying the Central Library with copies of their catalogues of books, if the scheme were to be a success :

This shows at least the existence of a keen desire all over the province to try the scheme.

(b) *Rules for Inter-borrowing of Books.* A tentative set of draft rules for inter-borrowing books amongst the libraries affiliated to the Punjab Public Library under the centralisation scheme was drawn up and circulated amongst the affiliated libraries for criticism and suggestions which they might be inclined to offer on the subject. The rules were modified in the light of the suggestions received and

with additions and omissions, were finally adopted. Copies of these rules together with the lists of the affiliated libraries were sent to all the libraries participating in the scheme.

(c) *As a Distribution Centre.*—Whenever the Government of India or the Punjab Government wanted to convey certain information to the public and other libraries in the Punjab, use was made of this Central Agency. A notable instance of this work was in the matter of supply of Government of India publications to public and other libraries in India at concessional rates decided by the Inter-departmental conference held at Simla in 1928. The information required to be communicated to all libraries lying in the jurisdiction of the Punjab Central Library was duly supplied to all the libraries required.

(d) *As a Bureau of Information.* The Punjab Public Library, Lahore, in the role of a Central Library has also served as a bureau of information by supplying information on various topics relating to libraries and other matters, not only to the libraries affiliated under the Centralization Scheme, but also to persons and libraries situated outside its sphere. For instance, a number of libraries asked for advice regarding the purchase of books. Consequently lists of suitable books in English, classical languages and provincial vernaculars (Urdu, Hindi and Gurmukhi) were always furnished to them. Again, the Punjab Government formulated in 1920 a scheme to establish libraries in small towns and villages in the province. We offered help and advice on the administration of Government grant for establishing these rural libraries.

(e) *Distribution of Superfluous Books.*—The distribution of superfluous books amongst the affiliated libraries was another function of the Central Library. Accordingly about 600 books that were no longer required in the Punjab Public Library were offered for distribution amongst the affiliated libraries. A printed list of these books was sent round and as many as fourteen libraries availed themselves of the offer.

I do not want to tire out your patience by going into further activities. Suffice it to say that the scheme was being worked out in this fashion when all of a sudden it had to be abandoned under the orders of the Punjab Government on account of financial stringency.

**6.— Comparison with a similar scheme in the west.**—I think it will not be out of place here to give, by way of comparison, a brief description of a similar scheme which is being introduced in England these days. This scheme is also based on voluntary co-operation which may take the following four forms: (i) Co-operation between neighbouring libraries, (ii) establishment of regional libraries, (iii) federation of special libraries and (iv) establishment of the Central Library. Let me explain them briefly:—

(i) *Co-operation between Neighbouring Libraries.*—The Co-operation between neighbouring libraries, particularly between libraries situated in the same town, is the first link in this system of organized library service. As it has been already pointed out no library can cover all the ground; but each stands to gain by fraternal co-operation. "This may take the form of free inter-loans of books, which can only become fully effective if a union catalogue of the local libraries can be brought into existence through the deposit in a central place of duplicate cards from each library. It can also be promoted by inter-changeability of borrowers' tickets enabling any resident of that place to borrow from any local library."

(ii) *Establishment of Regional Libraries.*—The co-operation between the local and adjoining libraries is only the foundation of this unique system. The next step in the words of the original scheme is "to link up these co-operating libraries into larger groups, each centred on some great library which may be conveniently described as a regional library. In a given area, such as a county, it will plainly be to the advantage of the weaker libraries if they are enabled to draw upon the resources of a stronger one. Duplication of the more expensive books and periodicals, and of those which are not in frequent demand, will be avoided, and the copies of such works in the large libraries will be utilized more fully than if they are confined to the areas immediately served by those libraries. The basis of such a federation would naturally be a payment made by the weaker libraries to the stronger. In this way the stronger libraries will gain increased funds, while the weaker ones will gain an improved service of books.

(iii) *Federation of Special Libraries.*—No public library, howsoever public spirited



it may be, can possibly provide out of its own shelves for all the requests of the scholar and the research student. For such purpose there must be special libraries, each specializing in its favourite field. Such are for instance the departmental libraries of the Government, Science libraries, and libraries for the blind. These special libraries working in the same or allied fields are intended under the scheme to pool their resources in the interest of research, no matter how far separated from each other they are situated.

(iv) *Establishment of a Central Library*--The most indispensable feature of the whole scheme is the Central Library. It is the logical complement of the various forms of co-operation which have been described before. To quote the words of the scheme: the chief function of the central library is "to supplement and to co-ordinate: to supplement the supplies of books which public libraries can provide for students and to co-ordinate the various existing agencies, so as to put the individual student, wherever he lives and whatever be the subject of his study, in touch with the particular library, general or specialist, which has the books of which he is in need."

Such in outline is the Central Library scheme which is being fashioned in England and which is already an accomplished fact in some of the States of the United States of America. If you have listened to me carefully, gentlemen, you will have observed that both the schemes, ours and the English one, closely resemble each other. Both are based on voluntary co-operation with which they desire to achieve the same object in view, viz., the development of library resources in the service of knowledge and research.

7. **Conclusion.**—I cannot close this paper without saying a few words by way of conclusion. This scheme, as you know, was a part

of a large Indian scheme; and as far as my information goes, it was not taken up in any other part in India. Here, too, it has been unfortunately dropped for want of funds, and I do not know when the financial situation will improve so as to enable the Government to take it up again. But may I ask if we cannot do anything in the matter of co-operation in the meantime? In this connection, gentlemen, I would like to make two observations for what they are worth. First, that the local libraries ought to inter-borrow books. I may point out that the Punjab University Library and the Punjab Public Library are already acting on this principle and we know how useful this practice is to our mutual benefit. If it is possible for two libraries to inter-borrow, it can certainly be possible for others. My second observation is that these libraries should in future be run on what is called a complementary basis. This, I think, requires a little explanation. The Punjab University Library, for instance, specializes more or less in Science subjects, such as Zoology, Botany, Chemistry and Mathematics; while the Punjab Public Library is richer in general subjects, such as Literature, Fiction, History, Philosophy and Economics. Similarly the Sir Ganga Ram Business Bureau and Library, I understand, is stronger in commercial and technical books. I do not know if the rest of our decent local libraries, like the Dyal Singh Library and the Dwarka Das Library, have placed before themselves a definite line of development. What a good thing it would be if the authorities of at least the more important local libraries could meet and decide among themselves the particular fields in which they should in future specialize? If they do so, they will avoid unnecessary duplication of books, and the consequent waste of money and space will be prevented. Above all, they will foster a spirit of mutual co-operation and healthy competition, thereby advancing the interests of library service in the province.



# \*The Poetry Shelf

JAI LAL KAUL, M. A.

*Sri Partap College, Srinagar.*

I.

‘THERE is a word, a “name of fear,” which rouses terror in the heart of the vast educated majority of the English speaking race. The most valiant will fly at the mere utterance of that word. The most broad-minded will put their backs up against it. The most rash will not dare to affront it. I myself have seen it empty buildings that had been full; and I know that it will scatter a crowd more quickly than a hose-pipe, hornets, or the rumour of plague. Even to murmur it is to incur solitude, probably disdain, and possibly starvation, as historical examples show. That word is “Poetry.”’

That is strongly put; and perhaps things are not so bad as Mr Arnold Bennett makes out. We cannot, however, deny that the poetry shelf is one of the least utilized shelves in the Library. Even the reader who reads much and enjoys reading, reads little or no poetry at all. We are too much after the knowledge of “information” to realize that the knowledge of “Power” is equally important and perhaps more conducive to human happiness. In our passion for exactness and objective reality of knowledge we are apt to forget that there are things—our objects of knowledge, methods of its acquisition, and modes of experience—that cannot be reduced to formulas. A scientific bent of mind (which we all prize, perhaps a little too fondly) indicates a love of truth with its precision, accuracy, and clear-cut definition, ignoring that truth is many-sided and, in its absolute or unconditioned state, a vague something which very few of us may be privileged to perceive. In its hot pursuit after the details through an analytic, unbiased intellect, this scientific attitude of mind allows no place to imagination, intuition, to a cast of mind that revels in likenesses more than in differences. Tagore has an epigram;

“We shut the door, lest error enter in,  
But truth asks, “How shall I admission  
win?”

This scientific pursuit after knowledge, jealously guarding itself against superstition and error, had to define its exact position even at the risk of excluding much that is loveable and of real human interest.

Definitions are valuable for exact sciences; but I shall, to-day, invite you gentlemen, to the Poetry Shelf which shows us the other side of things, where we cannot be precise and where our analytic intellect may ‘misshape the beauteous form of things.’ The Poetry Shelf contains poetry and while dealing with it, we cannot define our position with any chance of being accurate. Marlowe’s description of “beauty’s worthiness” as containing an inexpressible something:

“One thought, one grace, one wonder, at  
the least

Which into words no virtue can digest.—’  
and, as I may add here, which into definitions no wisdom can compress—is true of poetry itself. These words are true of poetry in yet another sense. When applied to poetry they hint at its suggestiveness and revealing power which awakens in us a sense of linking things otherwise dissimilar. Expression, while it expresses, limits and

“Half reveals and half conceals—  
The truth within.”

and nowhere to better purpose and surer effect than in poetry. The presence of this quality of suggestiveness in them is perhaps a reason why the contents of the Poetry Shelf are not popular though, paradoxical as it may seem to say so, it is exactly a reason why they ought strongly to appeal to us. Poetry leaves something to the reader’s own imagination which he as a lover of fiction has not learnt to exercise.

## II.

I have said that the Poetry Shelf contains poetry but we may naturally ask "What is poetry?" It would serve no useful purpose to recount all the definitions that have been attempted—definitions that emphasize one aspect of poetry at the cost of many others or narrow its connotation. These definitions have involved their authors, Aristotle, Sydney, Dryden, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Matthew Arnold, to mention only the foremost among them, in very abstruse discussions about the nature of poetry, its source, its form, its diction, its subject matter, its functions and many other questions arising from them. A discussion of all these questions would involve me in what I should call the metaphysics of poetry—a discussion neither pertinent to our present purpose nor profitable for the general reader.

The more I thought about it, the stronger became my belief that the best method of approaching a subject, not distinct in its definition and not lucid in its metaphysical exposition was to name a few poems and say, 'this is poetry, this is what the Poetry Shelf contains.' I have the authority of Matthew Arnold and Sir Arthur Quiller Couch on my side. In his well-known essays on poetry, the former says:

"Critics give themselves great labour to draw out what in the abstract constitutes the character of a high quality of poetry. It is much better simply to have recourse to concrete examples—to take specimens of poetry of the high, the very highest quality and to say: the characteristics of a high quality of poetry are what is expressed there."

The same idea in other words is expressed in the preface to his *Studies in Literature* by Sir Arthur Quiller Couch:

"By poetry in these pages I mean what has been written by Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and some others."

Matthew Arnold's conception of the highest poetry as possessing, in an eminent degree truth and seriousness is indeed very sublime. According to his canons, half a dozen poets, Homer, Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, and Goethe, would be world's classics. We could possibly add a few more names to this list; but in the main, we have no quarrel with

him there and we need not discuss the poetic truth embodied in the works of these immortals. They are what they are. Take any passage from their works, read it a dozen times (read it aloud and you will feel the charm of their verse); persuade yourself to appreciate it and you will get a glimpse of their power (for it is only by a constant discipleship that you may form an unerring critical judgment); think over the meaning of the passage and you will get at their interpretation of life. For, poetry at its best is a happy fusion of thought and feeling—thought that would break through your limitations of space and time and seize the very heart of things and feeling, concentrated and chastened.

The charm of poetry—let us honestly admit it—is indescribable. We must, no doubt, submit to the dictates of certain critics because we trust that a long companionship with the world's classics has engendered in them a perception of what is genuine and what is counterfeit, of what is gold and what is dross. But without disparagement to the utility of the art of criticism it may safely be said that an analysis of the virtues of a poem is most often a failure. Rowe and Webb have catalogued the virtues of Wordsworth, but do they tell us why we feel transported when we read a simple poem, say, *The Solitary Reaper*:

"For old, unhappy, far off things  
And battles long ago."

Take an innocent couplet from Ghalib:

"Dile nadan tuje huwa kiya hai,

Aakhir is dard ki dawa kiya hai?"

All of us have asked ourselves this question at some time or other of our lives. But where-in lies its charm? The couplet seems so simple that you are tempted to change the order of words to suggest that prose could as well express the idea; but you will fail if you entertain any such profane motives.

This short discussion is intended to tell us that the charm of poetry is incommunicable and that, therefore, the best approach to a study of poetry is through poetry itself. Criticism should follow or go side by side with poetry and not precede a study of it. It may lead to a richer appreciation of, but is not, and ought not to be made, a substitute for poetry. The tendency, noticeable among students particularly, of reading more of criticism and less of poetry is partly responsible

for its lack of popularity because otherwise a first-hand acquaintance with poetry is bound to work its spell on the reader.

### III

I said that poetry is indefinable. It is so because the charm cannot be adequately described. It is so, because there is no limit to its scope. You cannot, excuse me this mathematical conceit, define infinity. For, as Hazlitt says, "all high poetry is infinity" and let me add, it is infinite both in its connotation and denotation. Poetry sings to you of warriors, of 'lords and ladies gay', of starry heavens, of wayside flowers, of the innumerable human emotions, pity, terror, love, anger, hate, envy, joy, sorrow—well, a Sanskrit writer has enumerated thirty-three states which may be described by a poet. There is truth in what Matthew Arnold says of the choice of subjects. Daya Shanker Nasim is an instance. I always think that he wasted his great gifts in writing about the clever rat, the part-hero *Gul-i-Baqauli*. But stray examples apart, what is there that a poet may not poetize? What can long hide its real worth from the scrutinising gaze of the poet-seer?

The boldest philosophic speculation may be poetically treated and so may also be the lyrical out-pourings of devotion in the spiritual moods of Tagore's *Gitanjali*, Utpala's *Shubravali*, Maulana Rumi's *Masnavi* or the songs of Kabir and Mira-bai. Or, if we feel interested in grand themes grandly executed, we may find them in Homer and Firdosi, even in their English translations, and in Milton's epics.

For poetry embodying criticism of life and profound truths about life and death, Shakespeare, in the words of Alfred Noyes, "is at our side in the darkest regions that the human mind can traverse, and while he leads us to those lonely ramparts over the sea where that tragic figure in his sable cloak asks those eternal questions, he also points with his own hand to an ever-fixed mark, a star whose worth is unknown although his height be taken." Taking-English literature alone, we find eternal verities and "alliance to great ends" in Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and in all those poems which have passed into classics. Moreover, a Ghalib may equally well deal with a sigh, a Tagore with a baby's smile, a Cowper with a postboy, and an Iqbal with a tear-drop. The poet's imagination clothes the most common-

place occurrences with a halo of romance and impregnates them with profound thoughts on human life.

Human feelings provide themes, for poetry too numerous to illustrate. Take Ghalib's pensive moods, or the gaiety and the optimism of Pippa's song. Or let us watch the psychology of character and the conflict of mental states in Browning's dramatic monologues, such as "*My last Duchess*, *The Bishop Orders his Tomb at St. Praxed's*" or, in his more elaborate and complex study *Andrea Del Sarto*.

"A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!" English poetry is rich in nature-worship. The sun, the moon, the ocean, stars, trees, and many other objects of nature have been poetically treated. Here you have a wide range of subjects from the little brook, "babbling over pebbles" to the "dreadful festival" of Tagore's *sea waves* done into English by Rev. E. J. Thompson. Birds, beasts, insects, in fact all living creatures have had their poet-admirers, and even the awkward camel has been immortalised by Iqbal.

Love has been a perennial source of poetic inspiration.

Hafiz, "the greatest lyric writer of Persia," is full of it and so are all *ghazal* writers of Urdu poetry. From the irresistible passion of a Kohkan and a Majnun with its epic descriptions to the simple and rude joys of say, Burns's *Bonnie Lesley*, love has been sung in all its forms. We could collect our Kashmiri songs into a golden treasury. We have also no dearth of songs, promoted by love, but uttered in disgust or despair by fond lovers.

"Gods and men we are all deluded thus !

It breaks in our bosom and then we bleed."

Allied to the subject of love is the subject of grief over lost friends. In this also there has been a wide range from *Lycidas* and *Adonais* to *Break, break break* and *Rose Aylmer*, and from formal elegies written by Anis and Dabir to the less formal ones of Chakbast.

Poets have sung of the great glory of their motherland but we may not dwell on parochial, communal or imperialistic patriotism. We may instead read *The Soldier* by Rupert Brooke, or the song of Tagore that deserves to be better known in India :

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by Thee into ever-widening thought and action—

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake."

There is also poetry of the chase, poetry of the cannon shots and the heroism and cruelty of war. "The eternal challenge of feud-vengeance" rings in the lines:

"Fight on, my merry men all,

I am a little hurt, but I am not slain;

I will lay me down for to bleed a while.

Then I'll rise and fight with you again."

Some say that science cannot be poetized. As such it may not be; but who doubts its power of enriching the poet's thought. Take an instance.

"So careful of the type?" but no,

From scarped cliff and quarried stone She cries. "A thousand types are gone;

I care for nothing, all shall go."

Coming down from the summits of Mount Helicon, we find that petty animosities, and personal jealousies can also be rendered in poetry as in the Satires of Dryden and Pope. Trivial themes may be clothed in verse to appear serious as in mock epics like the *Rape of the Lock*, while serious themes may be burlesqued to give us parodies.

Perhaps at the foot of the sacred Mount, we come across what is called the Lighter Verse. All of us have seen John Gilpin "running such a rig" and Thackeray's sage with "the pigtail still behind him." I shall, however, save you a few tears on "The wreck of the steamship 'Puffin'" in the pond, "with

its waves running inches high." The poetry shelf need not contain only serious literature. Indeed it finds some room for nonsense, pure and simple. Those of us who have read Edward Lear's *Nonsense Rhymes* or *A Book of Nonsense* (Everyman's Library edition) will not easily forget "Pobble who has no toes," "The Quangle Wangle's hat" and "The King Nut-Cracker.

#### IV.

These, and infinitely more beautiful and varied than these, are the contents of the Poetry Shelf and though it fills but a small space in a library, its contents are comprehensive in scope, varied in form, and catholic in their appeal. Here is something for all tastes and temperaments and something to satisfy all moods, pensive and gay, pessimistic and hopeful, light-hearted and serious, moods when man is at peace with the world or distracted with revolt and conflict. From poems containing a few lines we have here tales and stories in verse, ballads, metrical romances and epics running into hundreds of pages. Perhaps these latter, the stories in verse, form an easy approach to the study of poetry by the beginner. Something of the unintelligibility and mystery that are associated with poetry will give way to the interest created by the story itself, heightened in its effect by the poetical form, as in Wordsworth's *The Seven Sisters*, *Michael*, *The Brothers*, or in longer stories such as Mrs Browning's *Aurora Leigh* and Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. I quite remember how as a student the study of the *Idylls* served me as an introduction to poetry and how absorbed I felt in its study. Incidentally, such a study may show to the reader the difference between the methods of Prose and Poetry.

I believe also that, while an understanding of the forms of prosody is necessary for a complete appreciation of poetry, it often proves a stumbling block in the way of a beginner. Such knowledge might wait till from long companionship with poetry the reader has become an enthusiast. He will then himself understand that the form is essential; that the primary aim of poetry is to delight and for this purpose it employs all ornament, musical sound, rhythmic movement, figures of speech, and all other artifices that are suggested by the Sanskrit word *Shranghar*. He will also understand that poetry does all this not artificially but spontaneously. For, when all is



said, poetry is inspiration; "it flashes on the inward eye" and the poet seizes the moment and immortalizes it. But a discussion of the distinction between Prose and Poetry, made more complex by the existence of Prose that is poetical and verse that is not so, is not important for the general reader.

To recur to my point. Reading aloud would unconsciously go a long way towards an appreciation of poetry which is "musical speech." From experience I may make bold to say that so long as a man feels the music and sings it to himself it does not very much matter if he does not conform to the modulations of voice and emphasis which a careful recitation would enjoin. I find that Nursery Rhymes have been introduced in the text-books for the secondary schools. This is an attempt in the right direction. Little Tommy Tuckers make a sure appeal to small children.

I also feel that the study of poetry would lose some of its terror if we did not miss the wood for the trees. It is the totality of the impression of a poem, the appeal of poetry to the poet in ourselves that matters most. Such as it is we lose the human meaning of the poem in a study of its words, an explanation of its allusions and a paraphrase of its passages.

Though as I have said the approach to poetry should be primarily and chiefly through poetry itself, yet criticism does facilitate a richer understanding of a poet's thoughts and themes. There is certainly no dearth of examples to show that we can better understand a poet when we know all about him and the times he lived in. The success of Lafcadio Hearn's interpretation of western poetry to students in Japan depended to such a large extent on the supply of information about the social background of a poet. That this is so is also amply illustrated by that fine introduction to the "intelligent appreciation" of the works of poets treated in *The Poetry and Life Series*, General Editor, W. H. Hudson. I am not speaking for the specialist or the scholar; but for the general reader, books of this sort should be stocked in larger numbers on the Poetry Shelf. We often mistakenly prefer complete works of poets to anthologies and selective editions of their poems. In the latter editions poetical works of many poets gain much for the general reader as in *The World's Classics* edition does Words-

worth. Librarians cannot afford to dictate to their readers the policy of "all or nothing"; indeed they should do their utmost to show off their wares to the best advantage. I am not, however, speaking of the outsides of books which are not unimportant because, though appearances may turn out to be deceptive, it is the attractive outside of a book that at first sight rivets the reader's attention and attracts his personal contact.

Poetry revels in pictures. It translates even the most abstract conceptions into concrete images. Books of poems illustrated with pictures would not only be attractive for the reader but also conducive to his proper understanding. This should be so particularly with children's poem books for it is my firm conviction that children should be introduced to poetry, which may be only oral in the beginning, earlier than to prose.

But after all is said, the appeal of poetry is to the individual himself who should have faith and *srada* enough if he is to be initiated into the poet's discipleship. Perhaps when these preliminaries of discipline are better known and practised we might not find men everywhere who read very widely in prose but who will say quite callously, "No, I never read poetry." We might, then, find the student-reader reading poetry outside his curriculum and steadily overcoming his prejudice against it.

Enthusiasm is catching and meanwhile we should do our best to popularize the Poetry Shelf. And it deserves to be popular. For, whatever be the proportion between poetry and prose works in public libraries, poetical works would predominate in private libraries which we greatly wish to see increasing in number. For the most part, prose works once read, are read for ever but a book of poems is essentially a book to be by one's side for solace and joy. Moreover an appreciation of poetry is necessary for the complete formation of literary taste; and the value of poetry as a means of "delight, ornament," and culture is great indeed. If literature is "memorable speech," poetry is the most concentrated and exalted form of it; if literature forms "the King's treasure," the Poetry Shelf is the cabinet of priceless jewels in it; and, whether we recognize it or not, whether we utilize it or not, there can be little doubt about the wealth of beauty, joy, and power that is locked within the Poetry Shelf.



# The Imperial Library

P. K. SARKAR, B.A.,

Calcutta.

**P**ERHAPS few know that India's premier library has a history behind it and that nineteenth-century Calcutta played a prominent part in its making.

One of the glories of joint action on the part of Europeans and Indians during the last century was the establishment of a Public Library in Calcutta. In 1835 Mr J. H. Stocqueler, editor of the *Englishman*, convened a meeting at the Town Hall with a view to establishing a Public Library in Calcutta. The resolution passed there was carried into effect, and Calcutta got her first Public Library. The new institution found shelter at the house of Dr Strong, who took a leading part in the movement. After five year's stay at his house it was removed to the College of Fort William, where it remained for three years. It was then shifted to its new abode at the Strand Road, where it occupied the upper floor of that building, while the lower floor accommodated the Agri-Horticultural Society. The new building was called Metcalf Hall, in memory of the Governor-General of that name.

It was both lending and reference library. The membership of this library was open only to those who paid subscription. Those who paid Rs. 300 (later raised to 500) were enlisted as proprietors of the library, and those who paid a monthly subscription were termed subscribers. The latter were graded as first, second, and third class subscribers, according to their subscription rate. The privileges enjoyed by the proprietors and first class subscribers consisted of the power of taking out books from the library.

As a library meant to serve the purpose of its clientele, which was mainly recreation, it was quite efficient. It had a stock of about 75,000 volumes, which mostly consisted of novels, both English and Bengali; although it also contained many valuable reference books. These latter were consulted by the members of the library along with certain outsiders on the permission of the Annual Committee.

Publicity was given to new books, and rare books were not lent out. There was a suggestion book in which a member would put down the name of the book he wanted to suggest for purchase. To ensure proper service, the library was kept open from 7 A.M. to 9 P.M., and Sundays were not observed as holidays.

After the reform of 1890 the reading room of the library was thrown open to the public, and a newsroom was established. Both these rooms were maintained out of the Corporation funds.

By 1880 the financial condition of the library had grown very unsatisfactory. The members of the library were approached for financial help, but without success. So, left without any help from its members the library sought assistance from the local Government. The Bengal Government consented to give help on the condition that the system of administration be improved, and the Government be given a hand in the management of the library. The proprietors, of course, could not easily consent to this. They were too jealous to part with their rights and privileges. In 1884 Mr Mackenzie, a proprietor of the Public Library, devised a scheme, a portion of which found favour with the council of the library. It sought to conciliate Government demand and the rights of its members. As a precursor to the general arrangement of our present library the portion is quoted below. "The library and its appurtenances to be made over to the municipality of Calcutta, to be maintained in perpetuity as a free library for the town and suburbs, to which all respectable citizens shall be admitted for the purposes of reading and studying on the premises, all vested funds so transferred to be subject to any trusts or charges now existing. This free library to be supplemented by a lending department, open only to subscribers and to the holders of shares in the present Public Library."

A draft of the scheme was referred to the Calcutta Municipality by the Bengal Govern-

ment, and their reply is given below: "As the population which uses free public libraries in European towns is at present scarcely existent in Calcutta, the Corporation is hardly justified in supplying a free library which will be used almost entirely by the wealthy members of the community, who now subscribe to it, and will probably then cease to do so."

In 1888 Sir Stuart Bayley became Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. He took the matter earnestly in hand, and appointed a committee to see what could be done in the matter. He was quite sanguine of finding some way out of the impasse. The committee's recommendations were that the municipality should give an annual monetary help to the library, and that in return the reading room should be open to the public, and the Municipality be given a voice in the management of the library. Sir Stuart assented to this proposal, and in 1890 the library was accordingly remodelled.

The history of the library after this date was one of the uninterrupted progress, though this progress was as good as the humble resources of the library permitted. Perhaps things might have continued thus, and Calcutta would not have had the library that she now possesses had not India got a Viceroy like Lord Curzon, a patron of knowledge and learning. Lord Curzon's own words may serve to relate the next turn in the history of the library. "One afternoon I paid this place (Metcalf Hall) a visit...and I found the shelves in these rooms filled with books, the majority of which had parted company with their bindings, while the room was occupied by a few readers of newspapers and light fiction, whose tenancy of the library was freely disputed by the pigeons who were flying about the inside of the room ..... Then about the same time I visited the Home Department, and I found stacked there, in a crowded and unsuitable building, the largest library of books, known as the Imperial Library, practically accessible to none but officials, useless for purposes of local study or reference, and unknown to the public at large..... Putting these experiences together I thought I might give to Calcutta,—the capital of British India, a library worthy of the name." With this object in view he approached the Calcutta Public Library, and the Agri-Horticultural Society to part their interest in the building, and hand it over to the Government along with the books it contained.

A long chain of correspondence passed between the Government of India and the Council of the Public Library. The negotiations seemed endless, but finally in 1901 it terminated happily. The proprietors of the Public Library were paid off the value of their shares and they ceded their claims to it. They were however granted the privilege of borrowing those books which formed part of the Public Library. Thus one of the important periods in the library's history closed with the amalgamation of the Secretariat Library, which itself had been formed in 1891 out of the Department Libraries of the Government of India, with the Calcutta Public Library.

The library was formally opened by the Viceroy on the 30th January, 1903. The newly formed institution was called the Imperial Library, and it still occupied the building on the Strand Road.

The policy of the new library is ably summed up in the Government of India resolution No. 201—7, dated 30th January, 1903 which reads as under: "The existing Imperial Library will form the nucleus of the new institution, which will be provided with reading rooms, public and private as at the British Museum and Bodleian libraries. It is intended that it should be a library of reference, a working place for students, and a repository of material for the future historians of India, in which, so far as possible, every work written about India, at any time can be seen and read." The same year saw the modification of certain rules, the important one of which was that books having more than one copy and those not in great demand could, on proper security, be lent out to persons engaged in special study or research.

Mr John Macfarlane, assistant librarian of the British Museum Library was brought to India to take charge of the new library. He was a very capable person, and he brought all his knowledge of library science to bear on the infant institution.

The amalgamation presented a difficulty in the arrangement and accommodation of books. During 1901—2 Mr Macfarlane devoted all his time to the classification and cataloguing of books. His system of classification is practical, and has stood the test of more than a quarter of a century. Moreover, it has been framed with due regard to the

special requirements of this country. The portion of classification scheme relating to Indian publications is sufficiently elaborate. But all the same, it cannot be called an up-to-date or scientific system. It lacks two of the essential requisites of a standard scheme of classification. Subjects are classified rather broadly, and there is no room for sub-division of a subject. This is specially the case with that portion of the classification scheme which deals with oriental languages. Secondly, the arrangement of subjects is such as does not allow their modulation into one another.

Cataloguing was not a thing unknown to the Calcutta Public Library. For it is said that with the reformation of the library in 1890 the then existing catalogue was improved under the direction of the late Mr Bepin Chandra Pal. He provided the library with an author catalogue and subject cross-references. Nevertheless, with the mass of Government documents in hand, and the new system of classification introduced, Mr Macfarlane had to do it all over again.

To facilitate public service Mr Macfarlane compiled and distributed among the readers, a pamphlet entitled "Hints to readers." He also sought to serve his readers by acquiring books, when needed, from the Asiatic Society Library and the Bengal Government Library. He was a capable administrator. During his tenure of office he was in a position to establish an exchange of government publications between the Government of India and some of the foreign countries, and able to acquire the publications of the provincial governments free of charge. With the money thus saved the library was in a better position to buy those books of which it stood in urgent need.

Although the Imperial Library is a public library, yet it is not meant for each and every person, but preferably for a student or a scholar. In order to keep away the undesirable element, he introduced the system of admission tickets, and the names of all *bona fide* readers were registered and arranged in alphabetical order. This step proved helpful to check the delinquents who had lost their tickets or transferred them to other persons.

Mr Macfarlane died in 1906. He was succeeded by Mr Harinath De, who held the office for a short time. During his time nothing special happened. Mr De was a

great scholar, and by his untimely death the library was left without a suitable guide till Mr Chapman came.

Mr Chapman sought to continue the policy initiated by Mr Macfarlane. The memorable events of his administration were his efforts to establish inter-library co-operation, and to make the Imperial Library a copyright library.

The need in India of library co-operation cannot be too much stressed. In America, and especially in England, library co-operation has made great progress. In the latter country the Central National Library caters for the needs of the whole country, while the regional bureaux and local libraries serve the requirements of the localities.

Mr Chapman proposed that classic books dealing with India be bought by each and every Indian library, and that others be acquired in co-operation and distributed among the libraries, each getting part of the whole. Another project of his was inter-borrowing. Mr Macfarlane had established inter-borrowing among the libraries of Calcutta. Mr Chapman now sought to widen this circle by suggesting to the libraries of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and the Punjab to co-operate with each other. To make it a success, he had a project of compiling a subject index to the contents of the various libraries. The two suggestions of inter-borrowing and inter-buying would involve a library less expense, but secure better service for it.

By virtue of the Book Registration Act of 1867, the local governments get copies of all books published within their borders. These books are either disposed of, or else so stacked as not be made easily available to the public. Consequently it is only reasonable that there should be a central repository of books where they may be better cared for by the custodians, and more freely used by the public. Similar reasons have dictated most of the countries to make their biggest libraries copyright libraries, and Mr Chapman's move in this direction deserves commendation.

Before Mr Chapman's time, readers were not allowed access to the catalogue of official publications. But this practice could not be defended, when the readers were permitted to consult certain official publications. Mr Chapman entered a strong protest against this, and secured the permission of the Government of

India to prepare a catalogue of official publications to which the public could have access. He also undertook the compilation of a catalogue of the Persian and Arabic manuscripts of the Bohar library, whose contents had been bequeathed in 1903 to the Imperial Library by Maulvi Sadr-ud-Din of Bohar. He had a mind to catalogue the heaps of hitherto un-catalogued books written in oriental scripts other than Urdu, Persian, and Arabic. But the credit of cataloguing them goes to Mr Scolfield, the present librarian of the Cambridge University Library.

Mr Chapman took great care in the preservation of books. Books in tropical climate rot away, and are eaten up by insects more easily than under other climatic conditions. With a view to check this deterioration he conducted certain experiments, which however came to nothing. Help was later sought from the Indian institute of Science, Bangalore. After some research it was found that books might be preserved if either they were transferred to an elevated place, where the temperature and humidity would be ideal for their proper upkeep, or an air-conditioning plant was installed in the library. To keep the integrity of the library the librarian naturally accepted the second proposal. But owing to the enormous expense involved this proposal was also dropped.

During the short time in 1913 that Mr Scolfield officiated as librarian he made great improvements in the management of the library. Under his guidance catalogues of the books written in oriental languages were compiled. He prepared a code for binding of books. This fulfilled a great need of the library. He also compiled a shelf-list of all the oriental books. But this is not up-to-date; its only merit, besides being an index to the arrangement of books on the shelves, is that it saves space.

In 1926 the library was shifted to its new building at Esplanade East. It is a noble building, worthy of the biggest library of India. With the new building the library got a new librarian. In 1929 Mr Asadulla succeeded Mr Chapman, who retired. The new librarian has earned a name for himself by an efficient library management, and a proper library service.

Mr Scolfield had given the library a shelf-list for books written in Indian dialects. But such a thing was never attempted in regard to books written in European languages. And it was a pity that the premier library of India should have no means of stock-taking. Now this crying need has been satisfied. The library is provided with an up-to-date shelf-list of books written in European languages.

Arrears of work had stagnated more or less every department. Heaps of books have been rescued from the stack room since 1929 and catalogued. Among these are the League of Nations' publications. The lending section presented the same arrears of work. Books which had been issued some twenty years ago were not recalled. True, the library did not suffer so far as the money value of the books is concerned, for books issued against security in deposits; but certainly it did suffer considerably, as some of these books have gone out of print and are unprocurable. The present librarian took action, and succeeded in getting back as many books as possible.

Like a trader eager to satisfy his customers Mr Asadullah has always the convenience of his readers in mind. He has introduced several innovations. To ensure proper service to his readers he has created a complaint book in which every grievance of the reader is put down. This book is daily inspected by the librarian, who seeks to satisfy the complaints as far as possible. He undertook the modification of the scheme of classification of Urdu, Persian, and Arabic books. This has proved of great help to his readers.

The library now possesses a comfortable reading room, with a staff ready to assist the readers in the selection of books. There is a separate research room for the use of those who are making a special study of a subject, besides a ladies' room for the exclusive use of ladies. The Bohar Library is intended for students of Persian, Urdu and Arabic literature; and there is a busy lending section which supplies the needs not only of Calcutta, but of readers from every nook and corner of India.

Thus the library has been marching onwards along the path of progress. From a humble beginning it has grown into a library of world-wide fame. Tribute is due to all those who

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# NOTES AND NEWS

## All-India Library Conference

### Working Committee Meetings.

#### I.

*Calcutta, May 8.*

A meeting of the Working Committee of the ensuing All-India Library Conference was held in the premises of the Imperial Library on Monday, the 8th May at 5-30 P. M.

Mr H. A. Stark, the President was in the chair. The following members were present :—Mr J. Van Manen, Mr K.M. Asadullah, Mr N.N. Ganguli, Mr S. Chatterji, Mr T. C. Dutta, Mr M.L. Banerji, Mr R.R. Mukherji, Mr A. M. F. Wahab, and Mr S. Kumar.

1. Resolved that Mrs Sarla Devi Chaudhurani be elected a vice-president of the Reception Committee.

2. Resolved that the following additional members may be added to the Working Committee. Mr R. R. Khan, Mr R. R. Mukherji, Mr A.K. Ghosh, Mrs N. Hoare, Mr K. Bishwas, Dr B. S. Guha.

3. The circular letter issued to librarians of certain foreign libraries was laid on the table for information.

4. The circular letter to be issued to the Principals of the Indian Colleges was laid on the table for approval and was approved.

5. Resolved that a delegation fee of Rs. 4 be charged from each delegate attending the conference.

6. Resolved that Mr M.L. Banerji be authorised to go round for collection of dues from the local members of the Reception Committee, and be allowed tramway fare for the purpose.

7. Resolved that an honorarium of Rs. 10 per mensem be sanctioned for payment to the Typist of the Imperial Library for attending to the Conference work.

8. Resolved that the money collected be kept at present under the charge of Mr K. M. Asadullah till the amount comes up to Rs. 100.

9. Resolved that September 12, 13, and 14, 1933 be fixed as the dates of the All-India Library Conference.

10. Resolved that a Publicity Committee be formed consisting of the following members with power to co-opt:—Mr H.A. Stark, Mr J. Van Manen, Mr K.M. Asadullah, Kumar Munindra Deb Rai.

11. Resolved that Mr N.N. Ganguli be asked to co-operate with Mr M.L. Banerji in the matter of collection of dues.

#### II.

*Calcutta, May 24.*

A meeting of the Working Committee of the All-India Library Conference was held on Wednesday, the 24th May in the Imperial Library at 5-30 p. m.

Mrs N. C. Sen (Vice-President) was voted to the chair.

The following members were present :—



Mr H. A. Stark, Mr S. N. Mukherji, Mr K. Biswas, Mr S. Chatterji, Mr N. N. Ganguli, Mr T. C. Dutt, Mr M. L. Banerji, Mr A. K. Ghosh, Mr R. R. Mookenji, Kumar Munindra Deb Rai Mahashai, Mr S. Kumar, Mr K. M. Asadullah (Secretary).

1. The financial statement for the period from the 30th March, 1933 to the 23rd May, 1933 was explained and approved.

2. The draft-letter inviting librarians in India to join the ensuing All-India-Library Conference was laid on the table for approval.

Mr H. A. Stark proposed and Mr K. Biswas seconded that the draft be approved and the letter issued.

3. The Secretary reported the acceptance by the Hugli District Library Association of the invitation to join and take part in the ensuing All-India Library Conference and also that the said Association had suggested that a bus-excursion might be arranged on the 17th of September, 1933, for members and delegates of the All-India Library Conference, so that they might be able to inspect the working of some of the Libraries in the Hugli District.

Resolved that the suggestion be approved and the 10th of September, 1933 be provisionally fixed as the date for the excursion

4. Resolved that Dr M. O. Thomas of the Annamalai University be elected President of the ensuing All-India Library Conference

5. Resolved that the Conference be held in the Hall of the Asiatic Society with the permission of the authorities concerned.

6. Resolved that Mr Mesrov J. Seth be elected a member of the Working Committee of the Conference.

7. Resolved that a Sub-Committee be formed with the following gentlemen as members to report not later than the 15th of June, 1933, whether an exhibition of library literature and literary curiosities be organised on the occasion :—Mr K. Biswas, Mr M. J. Seth, Mr N. N. Ganguli, Mr Johan van Manen, Mr T. C. Dutta. (Convener).

8. Resolved that a Sub-Committee for raising necessary funds be formed with the following persons as members:—Mr S. C. Chatterji, Mr A. F. M. Abdul Ali, Mr K. M. Asadullah,

Mrs N. C. Sen; Mrs Sarla Devi Chaudhurani, Kumar Munindra Deb Rai Mahashai, Mr N. N. Ganguli, Mr M. L. Banerji (Convener).

## The Public Library

Dr M. O. Thomas, M.A., Th. D., Dip. L.S. (LONDON), F.L.A., Chief Librarian, Annamalai University who presided over the Third Annual Punjab Library Conference held at Lahore in April last was requested by the trustees of a local public library to make some suggestions for improvement in their library. Most of the suggestions made by Dr Thomas in response to their request are such that apply generally to any library. We, therefore, reproduce below some of his suggestions for the readers of *The Modern Librarian*.

'Open Access'. There are a few general matters which we have to consider in connection with the organisation or re-organisation of any modern library. The first of these is perhaps the system of 'open access'.

In Western countries, particularly in Great Britain and America, libraries with closed shelves are entirely a thing of the past. If there is any at all, it is considered rather as an object of curiosity than a centre of culture and learning. Practically all the shelves in libraries except those which contain very valuable and rare volumes are open to the public. Free access to shelves has become an accepted and established principle. It has, no doubt, its dangers, the chief of which is loss of books. But the Western library authorities are quite prepared for it. They say that a library authority who is willing to spend a large amount annually for the benefit of the reading public should never grudge the loss of a few books. Moreover, why should the public as a whole be deprived of the benefit of browsing among books, handling them, examining their contents and perusing a few pages in order to make a wise selection, merely because there are two or three in the community who are inclined to be either careless or dishonest? Most library authorities, therefore, consider the loss of books insignificant particularly in view of the great benefit of 'open access' to the public. Closed shelf system is still followed by many libraries in this country. I shall not here enter into a discussion on the feasibility of open



shelves in India; but I should like to point out that those libraries in this country which have already adopted the 'open access' system have not found their loss greater than in Western libraries. Whatever the amount of loss may be, the resources of a library will never be fully exploited, unless and until it throws open its shelves to the public; neither would it be considered modern.

I should, however, insist that it be a safeguarded open access. In America most of the libraries to-day have practically no safeguards. But British librarians, like the British Government, still believe in a safeguards. And at the present level of our civic consciousness we in India cannot at all do away with safeguards. I am afraid we shall be compelled to have them for several years to come.

The best automatic device for wickets controlled from the counter can be obtained either from England or from the United States.

## DEPARTMENTS AND ROOMS.

### 1. Reference and Loan Sections.

Two of the most important sections of a library are the Reference section and the Loan section. The former contains books of reference such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, directories, gazetteers, manuals, ancient documents, important reports, rare books and manuscripts, maps, atlases, back volumes of important periodicals, statistical abstracts, etc., and the latter is made up of books for ordinary every day reading at home. In most libraries, these two sections are kept separately, usually in separate rooms.

**2. Periodicals Department.** Next in importance comes the Periodicals Department. In the modern literary world, periodical literature plays a very important part. It is particularly so in subjects like economics, politics, physics, chemistry, etc. Practically all the latest information on these subjects comes out in periodicals before it is available in book form. Some scholars give more importance to periodicals than to books. Every library should, therefore, have a good supply of well-selected periodical literature placed in a separate room and properly displayed to the reading public. They should also be well classified and well arranged. Periodicals will be used best only if they are

properly arranged and displayed and kept in a separate reading room where more concentrated reading than in a newspaper room or stackroom is possible.

**3. Newsroom.** From the point of view of literary importance newsrooms have a dubious place in public libraries. In American libraries they are gradually being abolished; but in Great Britain they are still provided. In India, at the present state of our literacy newsrooms are very essential and are likely to be one of the most popular of our departments. The room should be usefully and attractively planned and it can be done at a very low cost. News-racks built and arranged according to modern specifications will accommodate quite a number of papers and readers without the least feeling of disorderliness or congestion.

**4. Juvenile Department.** In the modern library world, any public library which has not got a juvenile department is considered antiquated. The juvenile library should be supplied with an adequate stock of books and shelves, tables and chairs of right dimensions for children. Further, the room should be attractively decorated to suit the taste of children. A full-time trained librarian, preferably a lady should be in charge of this department. It should be a separate department altogether and should have a separate entrance and exit so that children may not have a chance to wander into the other parts of the building.

**5. Ladies' Reading Room** A Ladies Reading Room is perhaps a necessary evil in this country and has to be provided as long as our social customs are what they are. But let us hope that only a few ladies who visit our libraries would be needing special accommodation and that in the course of time they would begin to make use of the general reading rooms as their sisters do in Western countries. Anyhow, at present a special room has to be provided for ladies who will not be using the general reading rooms.

**6. Lecture Department.** The public library being an educational centre should arrange for periodical lectures on educational and cultural subjects. These lectures may be the starting point of a regular

programme of adult education. They may be held once, twice, or thrice a week according to their demand and popularity. Discussion groups also may be arranged periodically. One way of making the library popular and of creating a demand for books is through the medium of these lectures and discussion groups. A display of books relating to the topic of the lecture or the discussion would be very effective in creating a demand and often such demand would be greater than the library could supply. The room should be equipped with a platform, a magic lantern and 250 seats. Lectures should be arranged for the children's department also. No special room is needed for their lectures. The children's room should be arranged in such a way as to allow its being converted into a lecture hall at any moment.

**7. Other Rooms.** (a) It is essential that there should be a work room for the staff where the work of accessioning, classification, cataloguing, etc. can be carried on without disturbance from readers.

(b) Every library needs a strong room where the most valuable and rare books and manuscripts as well as other important documents can be kept under lock and key. It should be supplied with proper steel shelves and an iron door.

(c) Some small rooms should be reserved for scholars and research students. If possible arrangement should be made in the library premises to supply them with tea and light refreshments at cost so that they may have an inducement to stay in the library longer than they would otherwise do.

**Librarian's Quarters.** Every public library should provide quarters for the librarian and one care-taker within the library premises. The advantage of this arrangement is obvious. A public library is supposed to be open for twelve hours, generally from 8 A. M. to 8 P. M. and a librarian who lives outside the premises cannot possibly control the work of his staff for more than half that period. On the other hand, if he resides within the premises, although he may not attend office more than six hours, his presence there and his occasional supervision at unguarded moments will have the effect of putting the staff and menials on the alert. That would, of course, mean greater efficiency in administration. Moreover, it would be to the advantage of the reading public to have the

librarian near by even when he is not in his office.

**Furniture.** In the matter of furniture utility and comfort should be combined with beauty. The requirement of each room should be carefully scrutinized both from the point of view of effective library service and aesthetics, and the proper pieces of furniture supplied and arranged in the most useful and attractive manner. In ordering furniture for each department the standard dimensions and specifications should be strictly followed.

**Hours of opening.** A public library should be kept open 12 hours of the day. These hours may be fixed according to climatic conditions as well as to suit the convenience of the majority of readers.

### BASIS OF EXPENDITURE

The accepted basis of expenditure in Western libraries is as follows :—

Books and Binding....	22%
Periodicals and Newspapers.....	5%
Staff and Establishment...	46%
Other items...	27%

Of course, this proportion is kept up after the library building has been erected and the initial stock of books purchased.

It will be noticed that the percentage under the heading 'Staff and Establishment' is higher than any other item. Western library authorities spend a high proportion of their income on the staff, because they thoroughly believe that the amount spent on books and periodicals will practically be a waste unless there is an educated and efficient staff to run the library on modern lines. They fully realise that the use made of a library depends to a large extent upon a well educated and technically trained staff, and hence they never grudge paying them according to their qualifications and ability. The object of the library is not so much to increase its stock of books year by year as it is to get them used by the public and an efficient staff alone can help to realise that object.

**The Staff.** The work of a library falls under three heads, namely 1. Administrative 2. Technical, and 3. Issue.

The duties of the administrative section consist of work connected with books acquisition

such as preparing and checking indents, placing orders for books and periodicals, accessioning them, passing bills and making payments, attending to office correspondence, preparing books for binding, and checking them when they are returned, and several other details connected with office administration. There is enough work in this department for one man even if the library is a small one. It goes without saying perhaps that the man selected for this post should be well educated, well trained in technique and with good administrative ability.

The technical section does the work of classification and cataloguing and to a certain extent helps readers in the choice of books. In a library of normal growth there should be at least two men in this department. If possible both of them should have a good general education and special technical training in the art of classification and cataloguing.

The counter section requires the services of two men who are quick, alert, patient and polite. Men with a good High School education will be sufficient for this work.

Besides these, there should be a trained children's librarian who has a knowledge of child psychology and who would be able to deal successfully with all sorts of children.

The library should also have a sufficient number of peons and menials for guarding the entrance and exit, dusting the books, watching those rooms in which no member of the staff is stationed, cleaning up the place, looking after the gardens, etc.

**The Librarian.** The success or failure of a library depends almost entirely upon its librarian. However much the authorities may desire to see their library making progress, it would be impossible to see much progress if they do not have the right kind of man as their chief executive. A librarian must be a scholar, a technical expert, and a first-rate administrator. A scholar because in the library he daily comes in contact with educated people most of whom would stand in need of his help and with the vast resources of literature at his disposal he could be an effective educator. He should be a technical expert and an administrator because modern librarianship is a science and unless he knows his job thoroughly and has the ability for administration, he can neither administer nor direct,

guide nor control the work of his subordinate staff. A library which has not got the right kind of librarian is sure to prove a failure. Any amount of external advice or suggestions will be of no avail if the proper man is not at the helm of affairs.

Western libraries have long ago recognized this fact and they always insist on the appointment of librarians who are both scholars and technical experts. Practically every library in Great Britain and America to-day has an academically and technically qualified librarian and he is given a status and a salary equal to those of a University Professor.

**Book Ordering.** "Which is better ordering books directly from England or getting them through a local agent or bookseller?"

From my experience I should say that ordering books directly from England is cheaper and in every way more satisfactory than getting them through local agents and booksellers. For the last four years I have been purchasing books worth about Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 45,000 every year for the Annamalai University Library. Knowing that we have been spending a big amount every year on books and periodicals, several local booksellers approached me with the request that I should place my order through them. But none of them so far has been able to offer us more advantageous terms than what we have been getting from our present bookseller, Messrs Blackwell of Oxford, nor have they promised better service.

I distrust any bookseller or agent who says that he can supply books cheaper than booksellers in England. According to the present state of affairs, no local bookseller can sell books cheaper and make a profit for himself. As far as book trade in England is concerned, I think I can speak with authority on the matter, because I was in England at the time when the final agreement was drawn up between the Publishers Association, the Booksellers Association and the Library Association and I know exactly what happened at their meeting. The chief clauses of the agreement were that booksellers should give a discount of 10% on net prices of books to all the libraries in Great Britain, and that no foreign libraries should be entitled to this discount, that the publishers would cut off the supply of any bookseller who gives a higher discount to British libraries and any discount whatever to foreign

libraries. It is self-evident that the discount which is refused to British booksellers who supply books to foreign libraries will not be given to booksellers in foreign lands. According to the present agreement, therefore, no Indian library could get any discount on net prices whether it purchases directly from England or through a local agent. In the latter case, in spite of all his assurances and promises there is the middleman's profit. At the present time the best terms that any bookseller could give us is net prices on new books, 5 or 10 or 15 or 20% as the case may be on second hand books plus free freight and insurance. If we want any better terms than these, the only possibility is through the formation of a strong Indian Library Association and the representation of the case of Indian libraries through that Association to the Associations of Publishers and Booksellers in England. Our Indian Library Association, however, is still in a nebulous state: but we hope to get it started next September.

## Quomi Library, Lahore.

In Pari Mahal, Lahore, a new public library named "Quomi Library" was opened on May 6th with a good stock of books on Sociology, Literature, History, and some vernacular books. This library was originally attached to the Lahore National College, now defunct. Bhai Permanand, M. A., M. L. A. performed the opening ceremony. The ceremony was attended by a large number of ladies and gentlemen interested in books and libraries. Speeches were made by Lala Dev Raj Sethi, M. A., Mr Jang Bahadur Singh, Assistant Editor, *The Tribune*; Sardar Gopal Singh and Mr Shanti Sarup, Librarian, Dwarka Das Library. Mr Shanti Sarup gave a brief account of the working of libraries in the U. S. A. and on the Continent and impressed upon the audience the part that libraries play in the social and political uplift of the people. An appeal was made for funds to meet the expenses of the library and the example of Andrew Carnegie, the great benefactor of libraries, was recited. Bhai Parma Nand told the audience that during his travel in foreign countries he found that every village possessed a library which was a centre of education and culture of the masses.

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# THE MODERN LIBRARIAN

## CONFERENCE NUMBER.

The next issue of *The Modern Librarian*, that is, the issue for October, 1933 (Vol. 4, No. 1) will be the *Conference Number*. It will contain proceedings and addresses of the All-India Library Conference to be held at Calcutta from September 12th to 14th, 1933.



# BOOK REVIEWS

**Hartman, Gertrude** *The World we live in and How it Came to Be.* New York, Macmillan. 357 p illus. \$ 5.

This is one of the most fascinating books for boys and girls the reviewer has ever had the privilege of reading. Parents who read this review are advised to scrimp and save and buy this book even though their children can own no other for years! It will be read with enjoyment by young people above ten years of age, and it will be an unusual adult who will lay it down unread. The book is well described by its sub-title *Pictured Outline of Man's Progress from the Earliest Days to the Present.* It tells the tale of our social development, blending together science and history in a remarkable unity. So skilful is the author's selection of facts from the vast fields of astronomy, geology, geography, biology, physics, ancient and modern history, mechanics and industry, that there is not a page of dullness in the whole. We learn with no waste of time on irrelevant details "how this came to be a world of sky-scrappers, dirigibles and dynamos." Perhaps the Eastern reader will perceive a certain one-sidedness in the picture. He may note that Cradle Lands of Civilization do not include the Indus Valley, and that handcraft and simple living appear somehow as a phase out-grown. But a similar lack in world histories for children will doubtless persist until some-one writes for the boys and girls of the East and the West, making vivid the contribution of both civilizations to world progress. Miss Hartman's achievement will interest educationists in India, for it has grown out of her experience as a teacher, and as editor of *Progressive Education*, and represents an integrated course in the Social Studies for Junior High School age. The style, however, is not that of the usual text-book, but is distinguished in its simplicity and vividness.

The beautiful pictures on almost every page and the excellent format of the

book are worthy of the publishers. I understand that a cheaper edition is published in England by Routledge, but this I have not seen. I am tempted to add, for the benefit of American parents, that a companion volume by the same author *These United States and how They Came To Be*, has recently been published. It is described as "a rich book." "Towering Cities and the Busy Hum of Men is a remarkable chapter on city life to-day".

Irene Mason Harper.

**Ilin, M.** *Black on White*—London, George Routledge 135. p. 38.-6d.

Not so long ago we instinctively divided books for boys and girls into two classes, "text-books," dull but necessary, and "story-books" for the precious out-of-school hours. But here is a text book amusing and absorbing. It is "the story of books," the history of human communication from cave pictures and cuneiform inscriptions to paper and print. It is cleverly illustrated, humorous and entertaining. This original book is the work of a young Russian, one of a group of writers and artists who are planning a series of books to interest not only children but peasants and industrial workers. Style and content are fairly illustrated by this bit from the first chapter "The first book was not in the least like a book of to-day. It had hands and feet. It didn't lie on a shelf. It could talk. It could even sing. To make a long story short, it was a living book—a human book." Who would not want to read further? Part I contains: A Living Book, Memory Aids, Talking Things, A Picture Letter, Puzzle, Writing, The Migrations of Letters; Part Two: Everlasting Books, Ribbon Books, Wax Books; Leather Books, Paper the Conqueror, The Fate of Books. One would like to write a supplementary chapter on the Bible, all reference to which is omitted by the Russian teacher although reading his dramatic stories of the making of papyrus, and the work of illuminating

manuscripts by the mediaeval monk, would help any child to understand the story of our Bible.

*Irene Mason Harper.*

**Ilin, M.** *What Time is It?* London, George. Routledge 135p. 3s. 6d.

Another new approach to history in the story of clocks. First the reader is introduced to the shocking confusion and wreckage of our modern world which would ensue "if all our clocks and watches were suddenly broken all at once." Then all sorts of time-pieces and other methods of keeping time are described, from 'the clock in the sky' to Big Ben. Walking sticks, posts, sun-dials, water-clocks of many kinds, milk-clocks, sand clocks and lamp clocks. History of primitive times, Egypt, India ..... the Middle Ages, the Industrial Revolution, the detailed story of watch-making, and so back again to the sky clocks "the only chronometers which never, never lie."

*Irene Mason Harper.*

**O'Leary, M.** *Preparation for Teaching.* London Univ. Press. 191p. 8s 6d.

Every teacher wishes to be effective in the class-room. Very often he muckers for want of proper guidance. Beside his personal qualities much of his success depends on the way he plans his lessons. He has "to decide what to emphasize, what to illustrate, what to neglect". The subdivisions of any lesson and the methods and form of it are left to the discretion of the teacher. 'Each of these three points claims attention and consideration. The teacher requires a skilful method both in the arrangement of the subject matter and its exposition. The book under review offers such a method. Schemes for the preparation of English—Reading, Language and Literature—History, Geography, Nature Study, Mathematics, Music, Drawing, etc are thoroughly discussed. At the end of every scheme very useful notes for students are given. References for further study whenever they are needed is another feature of the work. Every teacher, specially teachers in training will find the book very helpful.

*R. R. Kumria.*

**Adams, Sir John.** *The Teacher's Many Parts.* London Univ. Press. 362p. 6s.

Sir John Adams' books always make a pleasant reading; for he tries to appear neither

too learned nor too technical. The book under review is in line with his other books, easy and instructive without in the least attempting to be philosophically profound. The book opens with a pleasant discussion on a few works like 'Educand' and goes on smoothly from one aspect of a teacher's personality to another. The teacher in the conception of the author is not merely the creature of the blackboard and piece of chalk but he is a vital factor in society. He can be viewed from three sides—as a member of society, as a member of his profession and as himself. These three sides the author calls the Outer World, the School and the Inner World of the teacher. As a professional he is an artist, actor, disciplinarian, humorist, stimulator and examiner. In his private capacity he is a reader, writer, speaker, scholar, traveller and lastly emeritus. These characteristics as also those that make him a social being the author discusses separately here and there lending charm by his humour. Teachers—old and young will find useful tips in the book.

*R. R. Kumria.*

**Jacks, L. P.** *The Education of the Whole Man.* London Univ. Press. 255p. 6s.

The book under review is the result of 'Copernican revolution' in the mental history of the author. For long his knowledge 'was all book say, lecture-say, sermon-say and hear-say in general,' until one day it flashed upon him—What does it all mean? The answer came that all Philosophies and Sciences ..were *injunctons to live in a particular way and avoid living in other ways* Behind the information was the command, which took the form, "Live in this way and avoid living in that." From such a point of view the science of Education that shows the way to right living assumes paramount importance. Education becomes the 'summary imperative addressed by the Universe to our generation, which it must either obey or be damned from disobeying.' According to the author education is an obligation imposed on us by the nature of things. It should be the key industry of civilization.

The education that the author recommends is the education of the 'whole man.' This is an Ideal that may not be reached in one's life-time; for every achievement makes a further demand 'for more.' "Never do I plead for education without hearing a voice which says to me "Thou art the man." The whole

man comprises both mind and body, either of which cannot be neglected. An S<sup>1</sup> culture imposed upon a C<sup>3</sup> body does more harm than good. A truly educated person is of high vitality 'which he uses in the most economical and beautiful manner, a source of delights to the possessor and to all who behold him.' He is accomplished in trusteeship, in courage, in promptitude, in skill, up to the level his knowledge requires.' The whole man is primarily a creation. All creation needs freedom. The author, therefore, pleads for Dominion Status for Education.' And here he is voicing the sentiment of all new Educationists. The revolution that he has felt in his mind has already swept over an important portion of the globe. We only welcome the author into the new field and appreciate his great and genuine enthusiasm for the new cause. Although a 'late-bloomer' he is a great-bloomer and that is a source of joy to us.

The chapter on 'Education and Sex' shows an extra-ordinary maturity of thought. He

frankly admits the almost uncontrollable nature of the sex instinct. The notion now widely prevalent, that science offered under the form of "sex knowledge" will succeed in taming it, when morality and religions have failed, is a delusion of sophisticated minds." The passions which inflame the lover's proceedings are well-nigh untamable, like the wild ass, the hurricane or the earthquake, and care no more for science, but less than for ancient taboos. They have their origin in the depths of the Universe and beat with the force of nature's pulse? Whatever control is possible, it is only through a strong and healthy body and the encouragement of art.

"Increased weight must be thrown into awaking and training the sense of beauty the greatest of our lost inheritances, but the best of all prophylactics against vice, the most vitalizing and uplifting of all the positive motives that interest and actuate the whole man."

R. R. Kurnia.

## Books to Read

(Supplied by the Imperial Library, Calcutta).

\*Eddington, Sir Arthur. *The Expanding Universe*. Cambridge Univ. Press. 1933. 3s.-6d.

When the general theory of relativity was formulated, Professor Einstein had to do away with infinity by the introduction of a small "cosmical constant" into his fundamental equations. So that in addition to the local curvature of space in the neighbourhood of massive bodies required by the general theory, a general curvature of space was postulated which meant that the universe turned back upon itself, being finite but unbounded. It was, no doubt, an advance in the mathematical conception of the universe and perhaps accurate, so far as human accuracy can go, when it came to be realized that this finite universe was increasing in volume as measured by the ordinary standards. And as a matter of fact, an expansion or contraction was what one should think a legitimate conclusion from the constitution of the Einstein universe of uniformly diffused matter shown to be unstable. Afterwards some observations were recorded in America which supplied the

evidence for the theory of expansion of the universe. The fact was discovered that the most of the extragalactic nebulae seemed to be rushing away from the earth with speeds proportional to their distance. The theory was complete, but it was not altogether smooth-sailing and received several shocks. Professor Einstein had to give up his "cosmical constant" as an unsatisfactory assumption. Basing his assumption on the direct observations that the extra-galactic nebulae have invariably large velocities, their speeds of recession were explained without making any further assumption of expansion of the universe.

Sir Arthur Eddington, however, sticks to the theory of expansion and does not see his way to abandoning the cosmical constant. His arguments are pretty strong and convincing. He, however, strikes out a new path in as much as he is not influenced by the reason originally put forth for the expanding universe. He connects by a bold assumption the radius of

\*Books marked with an asterisk (\*) can be borrowed from the Imperial Library on depositing their price

curvature of the universe and the number of protons and electrons in it with the mass—ratio of the proton and electron. Students of physics and astronomy will greatly profit by the perusal of the work which contains also a detailed history of the theory.

\***Hurwitz, A.** *Vorlesungen über allgemeine Funktionentheorie und elliptische Funktionen.* Herausg. von R. Courant. Dritte Auflage. Berlin. Springer, 1929. Mk. 30—80.

It is a treatise of comprehensive nature on the theory of function. The third edition has been considerably enlarged and all the old matters thoroughly revised. The theory of functions as developed during the recent years rests upon a definite conception of the arithmetic continuum forming the field of variable, and including a precise arithmetic theory of the nature of a limit, as well as upon a definite conception of the nature of functional relation. The present work is of special value as it seems to have been written with the object of presenting in the form of a continuous treatise and rendering more easily accessible to the students of mathematics than hitherto, the chief results in a connected form of mathematical researches which are to be found scattered through a very large number of memoirs, periodicals and treatises. Students of pure and applied mathematics and of allied subjects having some knowledge of German will be greatly benefitted by the perusal of the work under notice.

\***Keith, Arthur Berriedale.** *The Constitutional Law of the British Dominions.* London, Macmillan, 1933. 18s

Professor Keith deals with the subject with his characteristic thoroughness, and the effects of the Statue of the British Parliament upon the constitutional law of the Empire and the present position of the various Governments of the Empire in relation to one another and to the League of Nations have been set forth in a new perspective and with considerable lucidity. The far-reaching importance of the Statute can, on no account, be denied and no attempt has been made to minimise it. Its distinctly permissive character has been emphasized and upheld as regards the more important dominions. Emphasis is equally laid upon the fact that the Imperial Parliament is to have the supreme authority in all affairs which is maintained by the enactment of the Statute of Westminster unalterable by any Dominion authority. There

is also the provision in the same Statute for continued legislation for the Dominions with their consent. Professor Keith clearly shows how these facts completely dispose of Mr J H. Thomas's contention that the United Kingdom is now a Dominion. Perhaps they would most effectively refute Mr Mc Gilligan's opinions that His Majesty the King Emperor, on the advice of his cabinet of ministers, has not the power or prerogative for making treatise for the Irish Free State and for the matter of that for any Dominion of like status. Professor Keith, however, elucidates the fact that some of the recent events in the Empire, which are no less important than the Statute of Westminster have very far-reaching effect upon the constitutional relations between the members of the British Empire.

One of them is the right, conceded to the Irish Free States in 1931, of direct advice to the king and of the possession of a special seal for use upon documents issued on that advice. And what the Irish Free State has done serves as a precedence and can be done by any other Dominion and there can be no denying the fact that the power to make treaties entirely uncontrolled in any direct manner by the British Parliament yields to the Dominion "the right to claim international status as distinct States." In case the king receives inconsistent advice from any of the dominions which are autonomous within the Empire and in no way subordinate one to another, with regard to their domestic or external affairs, Professor Keith suggests that difficulty can be solved by "a referendum of the Imperial Conference. Another important fact is that the dominions have been recognized, by the treaty of Versailles and by virtue of their membership of the League of Nations as sovereign states. The protest, however, of the British Parliament against registration of the Irish Treaty at Geneva is duly recorded by the author. He also explains that the determination of the Ottawa Conference for the establishment of the doctrine of inter-Imperial preferences is a matter quite outside the sphere of operation of most-favoured nation clauses in treaties with foreign powers. Professor Keith shows that it needs only a reiteration of the doctrine of the Imperial Conference of 1926 that the relation of the different members of the commonwealth, among themselves, do not come within the purview of the law of international relations

Facts relating to both Imperial unity and otherwise have been set forth, and the method of treatment does not show any preconceived notion or any predilection for a per theory. The conclusion drawn from the data, which the author so successfully handles, shows considerable caution - and Professor Keith warily lays down that State, which the dominions represent, is of unique type and does not conform to any hitherto recognised. People, whose profession is law, will perhaps think that the author does not lay enough stress on the legal principle of the unity of crown throughout its Dominions and that the legal aspect on the whole of the attempted Dominion secession of the Crown's prerogative for the alienation of any part of its Dominion has not found such appreciation. But the author's views with regard to the *ultra vires* character of the dominion of legislation attempting to alter or rule out, the Imperial enactments of the British Parliament or the ancient prerogatives of the Crown, will be agreed to by a majority of those who are interested in the legal aspect of the matter. The students of constitutional law will find the work of immense benefit as it yields with scrupulous accuracy, within a very reasonable compass, all that one is required to know about the Dominion constitutions and includes the major constitutional development of late, with reference to the leading cases and their legal bearings, in as much as the effects of legal decisions can be traced in upholding the position of the Canadian Provinces against the Federal Government and in weakening that of the Australian States. The powers and practices of the Governors-General and of their lieutenants involving various aspects and changes, as well as those of the legislatures and of the Courts, are accurately and succinctly surveyed, and the great present-day problems which the Dominions are facing now have been outlined with special reference to their legal aspects and bearings.

**King, C. Daly.** *The Psychology of Consciousness; with an introduction by Dr William M. Marston, London, Kegan Paul. 1932. 15s.*

The work forms part of the "International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method." The author has attempted to arrive at a correct idea of what is understood by consciousness and calls attention to what he thinks should be regarded as a well-recogni-

sed fact that consciousness is not a mere accidental by-product of human life, but constitutes the chief goal of living. He asserts that the degree of completeness of consciousness, as quite distinct from happiness and other criteria of similar nature, is the only "valid measure of normalcy" that man possesses. In the preliminary part of the work, Mr King discusses various theories with regard to the main subject matter, and from the author's point of view such a discussion is essentially necessary in the present case, for developmental destinies of humanity, wherein consciousness alone plays a self-controlling part, can only be directed when the correct nature of it is known. Attempts have been made to meet the issue by analysing the opinions upheld in current psychologies. Behaviorism would deny its existence altogether. Other objective psychologies where biological facts are taken as realities worth considering, regard consciousness as what cannot be dealt with definitely. Psycho-analysts although they talk freely about the divisions or states of consciousness, such as sub-conscious, fore conscious, and the unconscious also cautiously evade any direct inquiry into the nature of the phenomenon just as they evade the scientific approach to other psychological problems. To assert that the nature of consciousness is self-evident leads to an assumption which is just as unproductive as to say that it does not exist, for the behaviorists are unable to tackle it.

The author explains and criticizes all these and many other theories that have been put forth on the nature of consciousness; the premises and conclusions relating to all existing theories have been examined and analysed, and only those have been selected and adapted which conformed to the author's criteria. It cannot be expected that all his readers will find themselves in agreement with the adequacy of the author's standard and bases of judgement, but there can be no gainsaying that the method employed throughout the work is consistent and logical, leading to conclusions which are precise and exact. From time to time we are inclined to think that the line of argument followed by the author leans towards mysticism. But he often retracts and clings with all his might to the objective view point and dispels all fear with regard to any unphilosophical deviation. In controversy, he is implacable and with a mas-



terly grasp he handles his weapons, draws out, and exposes with an uncompromising rudeness the confusions and obscurities of his opponents.

There are assertions which readers will not always be ready to accept as for instance those relating to super-physical consciousness, or its ultra-experimental aspects, but these are minor matters on which people have their own opinions so long as they are not shaken by any positive arguments to the contrary. The author always keeps his object steadily in view and never fails to remind his readers with great emphasis that the physiological explanations are only the "groundwork" and not the "superstructure" of psychological solution of the problem in its entirety.

It is not necessary, perhaps one should think, to follow strictly the author's line of arguments to arrive at conclusions leading to hypotheses very similar to those propounded by the author. There are views according to which material consciousness, sensory, intellectual and emotional, is only, a physical energy of some special nature, generated according to certain specific material configuration at the synapses of the central nervous system; and if it be assumed with some validity, as it is done by the author of the present volume, that the great end of one's existence is increasing his "active awareness," the only way of doing it is by constantly and continually exercising his perceptions, thoughts and emotions. By such continuous and constant, and hence systematic activity, the number and variety of synoptic connections may be increased and new consciousness added to old. It may be said, with some degree of truth, that the exercise of consciousness is the sole way to increase capacity just as muscles attain development by their constant and systematic exercise.

If one agrees with the author in his opinion that consciousness is a physical energy, more complex in its nature and more potent in its action than nerve trunk energy and yet owes its very existence to the prior occurrence of nerve excitations, it would seem to him quite a legitimate supposition that there may be also a super-material consciousness depending for its existence upon the prior-occurrence of the consciousness energy one knows about. Whether a superphysical consciousness is postulated on grounds of logical necessity, or whether it is assumed as a factual probability the practical implication for human life is unchanged, and increasing consciousness is the systematic way to self-mastery leading to freedom from environment. By those readers who are in the habit of walking over a more tangible ground and who are not inclined to assume any superphysical or super-material consciousness either as a logical necessity, or as a factual probability and to whom "our thoughts, feelings, longings, aspirations and passions" are no other than mere manifestations of physical energy essentially dependent upon the constitution and action of the brain, the work will be regarded as no better than a mere apologia of the intuitionist school dressed up in a new garb which people of the sterner school of thought will hesitate to call scientific. The human pre-occupation has perhaps no real meaning and is not made much of by the psychologists who hold that physiology should be the basis on which the whole superstructure of psychology as a science should stand and have no obsession with regard to super-consciousness of tradition and of secret human desire. But the book is still worth reading as it presents the old thoughts in a new form and the intuitionists will find in it perhaps the last words that can be said in their favour.

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*(Continued from page 173).*

helped it in this march ahead, and especially to one who gave it a new lease of life. Just as many a reader in the Bodleian Library at Oxford has blessed the name of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, its original founder, and of

Thomas Bodley, its restorer and second patron so also shall, I am sure, a reader in this country bless the name of Lord Curzon to whose charity it now owes its present prosperity.